

BEWARE OF FORNICATION

March 10, 2003 (David Cloud, Fundamental Baptist Information Service, P.O. Box 610368, Port Huron, MI 48061, 866-295-4143, fbns@wayoflife.org; for instructions about subscribing and unsubscribing or changing addresses, see the information paragraph at the end of the article) –

The following is from *The Biblical Fundamentalist*, March 15, 1989:

There is no way to measure the sorrow, the suffering, the shattered dreams, or the sadness that result from the evil, terrible, wicked sin of fornication. The sexual sin called fornication is indeed a great problem. When it is committed against the marriage partner it is properly labeled as adultery. This sin has been committed by the rich and that poor, by the small and the great. The Scriptures show that even the greatest men have fallen to this horrible sin. David, who had the greatest heart, fell to this sin; Solomon, who had the greatest mind, fell to this sin. Proverbs 7:26 reminds us that “many strong men have been slain by her.”

Notice three different aspects concerning fornication.

THE POSSIBILITY OF FORNICATION

“My son, keep they father’s commandment, and forsake not the law of they mother; Bind them continually upon thine heart, and tie them about thy neck. When thou goest, it shall lead thee; when thou sleepest, it shall keep thee; and when thou awakest, it shall talk with thee. For the commandment is a lamp; and the law is light; and reproofs of instruction are the way of life: To keep thee from the evil woman” (vv. 20-24a).

Many who have committed adultery afterward admit there was a time when they believed, “It could never happen to me!” Yet the Scripture warns that the possibility is always there. Along with the warning of the possibility there is also a way to avoid it. Obedience to the Scriptures will “lead,” “keep” and “talk with thee” (v. 22), thus guarding against fornication. From the Scriptures let us observe the second aspect of this problem.

THE PROTECTION AGAINST FORNICATION

“From the flattery of the tongue of a strange woman. Lust not after her beauty in thine heart; neither let her take thee with her eyelids” (vv. 24b-25).

Since fornication is a real possibility, the Scripture provides four warnings one should be aware of as protection against adultery of fornication.

First, man should avoid succumbing to HER FLATTERING TONGUE (v. 24; 7:21). The tongue can be a piercing spear or a soothing fountain. The tongue can be used to inspire a nation to battle the enemy, or it can be used to foam out profanity of the worst kind. The words of a harlot, called here the strange woman, like a great spider can spin a web around its victim, forcing him into the trap. “With her much fair speech she caused him to yield, with the flattering of her lips she forced him” (7:21).

Often a man does not receive the encouragement, the words that should appropriately be given by his wife to sustain him and strengthen his ego. If the wife does not, Satan has someone out there who will. Satan will use the same “flattering tongue” by a strange woman, which should have been used by the wife, to bring a man into a sexual trap. We men must beware of and avoid succumbing to the flattering tongue.

The second thing one should avoid to is the strange woman’s FLESHLY BEAUTY (vs. 25a). It is not uncommon for a woman who took great care for the way she looked prior to her marriage. A wife, in modesty, should keep herself as attractive as possible for her own husband. If she does not, she opens the door to another who will. The wife, realizing that the husband has a natural tendency to be attracted too the beauty of a woman, should maintain her own beauty, especially her inward beauty. She should not consider herself in a contest with other beautiful women of the world, but rather desire to be her “beautiful best” for her own mate.

In contrast, even if a man’s wife makes no attempt to keep herself attractive, the husband still has no right to be turned aside by the beauty of another. With the exploitation of the human body by Hollywood and the advertising industry, there are many temptations which could contribute to a man yielding. As men, we must, by all means, avoid succumbing to a woman’s fleshly beauty.

Another safeguard given in the text concerns THE EYES. Avoid succumbing to her fooling eyes (v. 25b). One can communicate volumes with the eyes. I had a school teacher who could say more with the sternness of her eyes than most could say with a multitude of speaking.

Recently I walked into a store to purchase a snack. The young lady behind the counter, whom I had never seen before, smiled and winked. An attractive woman such as this could, with those fooling eyes, easily lay a snare for some potential victim. The victim could have been me. I hurriedly made my purchase and left those “fooling eyes” behind. As men, we are warned to beware of the fooling eyes.

The fourth safeguard given is the avoidance of HER TOUCH (v.29). There is no way to calculate the power of the touch. A mother can, with her touch, calm a frightened child. A companion can touch as though to say, “I am with you.” Yet, outside of marriage the touch can be dynamite. I recall years ago working on a job which required working in

close confinement. A young lady who worked there would sometimes casually walk by and sometimes bump me. There was a power in the touch which I soon recognized and avoided. This taught me the valuable lesson that I should always beware of the powerful touch.

THE PROBLEMS WITH FORNICATION

When a man succumbs to the flattering tongue, the fleshly beauty, the fooling eyes, or the fondling touch, he is destined for great problems. Our text clearly shows that such a man faces defilement: “For by means of a whorish woman a man is brought to a piece of bread: and the adulteress will hunt for the precious life. Can a man take fire in his bosom, and his clothes not be burned? Can one go upon hot coals, and his feet not be burned? So he that goeth in to his neighbour’s wife; whosoever toucheth her shall not be innocent” (vv. 26-29).

He faces being despised: “Men do not despise a thief, if he steal to satisfy his soul when he is hungry; But if he be found, he shall restore sevenfold; he shall give all the substance of his house” (vv. 30-31).

He faces destruction: “But whoso committeth adultery with a woman lacketh understanding: he that doeth it destroyeth his own soul” (v. 32).

And, at last, he faces dishonour: “A wound and dishonour shall he get; and his reproach shall not be wiped away. For jealousy is the rage of a man: therefore he will not spare in the day of vengeance. He will not regard any ransom; neither will he rest content though thou givest many gifts” (vv. 33-35).

Note, in particular, the loss incurred by the man who fornicates. The Scriptures declare that “by means of a whorish woman a man is brought to a piece of bread...” (v. 26).

When I observe this verse, I think of many lost treasures. A man loses the “treasure of a good name” (Proverbs 22:1). A good name is not acquired overnight, but it may be lost in a single night.

Another treasure is the “treasure of a peaceful mind” (Psalm 51:3). I have seen men with a strong mind and a healthy emotional state crumble after committing adultery. Like David, they would say, “My sin is ever before me.” The perpetual, haunting effect of this sin would take its awful toll, stealing away the treasure of a peaceful mind.

Then there is “the treasure of a healthy body” (Proverbs 7:26-27; 10:27). There are many venereal diseases such as gonorrhea, syphilis, and AIDS, which can result from fornication. There is currently a campaign going on to educate people about “safe sex.” Outside of the marriage bond, there is no such thing as “safe” sex! The physiological and

mental problems will eventually rob a man of “the treasure of a healthy body” (Proverbs 7:26-27; 10:27).

One treasure often lost is “the treasure of a happy home.” I have heard wives say, “It would have been easier to have heard that he died in a wreck, loving me, than for him to do this and not know if he loves me.” The little children, the wife, and the home in general are often destroyed when this terrible sin takes place. The home is certainly a treasure to be guarded.

Another sacred treasure of the Christian that is lost is “the treasure of a full ministry” (Proverbs 2:14). Preachers, in a moment of passion, have lost their ministry. The loss of this great treasure is an awesome price to pay for a passing pleasure.

When these and other treasures are lost, the only things that remain are “the crumbs.” He is brought to “a piece of bread.”

If each crumb were labeled, the first would be called the “crumb of sorrow”; the next, the “crumb of shattered dreams”; finally, the “crumb of the sober reality of what has happened.”

The picture is vividly clear. This terrible sin reduces a man to a piece of bread... to a crumb! May we be stirred by the warning in Proverbs, lest we lose our most precious treasures.

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